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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 KUWAIT 000213

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PBTS](#) [KU](#) [IZ](#)
SUBJECT: CROWN PRINCE/PRIME MINISTER: "NO PREMATURE TROOP
WITHDRAWAL FROM IRAQ"

REF: A. KUWAIT 196
[1](#)B. KUWAIT 203
[1](#)C. KUWAIT 204
[1](#)D. KUWAIT 207

Classified By: CDA Lenderking for reasons 1.4 b and d

Summary

[1](#)1. (C) On February 18, CDA took advantage of meetings between former Secretary Albright and the Kuwaiti Crown Prince and Prime Minister to discuss Iraq, Iran, and prospects for Middle East peace. The GOK leadership praised the USG liberation of Iraq but warned against a premature troop withdrawal. The two officials reiterated GOK readiness to send an ambassador to Baghdad, but cited security concerns as the reason for the delay. The CP and PM also called for a diplomatic solution to dealing with Iran and reiterated support for Palestinians. Also raised were Kosovo independence (Ref A), the Special Tribunal for Lebanon (Ref B) and Syrian intransigence (Ref C). End Summary.

No Premature Troop Withdrawal from Iraq

[1](#)2. (C) In February 18, CDA and former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright met separately with Kuwaiti Crown Prince (CP) Shaykh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al Sabah and Prime Minister (PM) Shaykh Nasser Mohammed Al-Ahmed Al Sabah. The CP lauded the USG liberation of Iraq from Saddam Hussein's tyranny but said that the U.S. must finish what it started. He told Ms. Albright that the future of the entire region hinges on the success of Iraq and that a withdrawal of Coalition troops would result in chaos for Kuwait and its neighbors. (Note: This sentiment was also stressed during a luncheon with prominent Kuwaitis, including former Kuwaiti Ambassador to the UN and Secretary General of the GCC, Abdullah Bishara. During the lunch, Ms. Albright was advised that a U.S. withdrawal from Iraq would advance the cause of "fanatics" in the region, while another participant said forcefully, "We will not allow you to leave the area.")

[1](#)3. (C) The CP said that Kuwait suffered at the hands of the Iraqis and Saddam regime during the 1990-91 invasion and occupation, but that now, Kuwait wishes to play a role in stabilizing Iraq. As an example, the PM said that the GOK is ready to build 117 houses "immediately" for Iraqis whose property encroaches on the Kuwaiti border (ref D).

[1](#)4. (C) The PM noted the importance and urgency in sending a Kuwaiti Ambassador to Baghdad, and acknowledged receipt of an Embassy letter identifying temporary locations for the

Kuwaiti mission in the Green Zone. In response, he said that Kuwait is ready to send Ambassador-designate MG (retired) Ali Al-Mou'min to Baghdad, but stated that security concerns continue to delay his assignment. (Comment: The GOK does not have its story straight on why it continues to drag its feet on sending an ambassador to Baghdad after the Amir told the President on January 11 that Kuwait would do so. The MFA told us last week that the Kuwait Ambassador to Iraq would go as soon as the Iraqis sent an ambassador to Kuwait. The MFA has not cited security concerns as an impediment. We will continue to press the issue, with the understanding that Kuwait's preferred stance would be to move in tandem with the GCC and not be out in front. End comment.)

Iran: No Military Intervention

15. (C) The CP told Ms. Albright that "we're all afraid of a nuclear-armed Iran," and said that he hoped that the IAEA would be able to carry out inspections and effectively monitor the Iranian nuclear program. He said that Iranian officials have repeatedly declared to the GOK that GOI nuclear intentions are peaceful. The PM echoed the CP's call for a diplomatic solution and added that Kuwait rejected military action as an end to the political standoff.

OPIC Palestinian Aid

16. (C) In response to a query from Ms. Albright on whether the GOK would consider guaranteeing loans made under the auspices of the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC), the CP said that "we will spare no effort for the Palestinians." Both he and the PM expressed interest in

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contributing OPIC funds and requested more information.

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